



Stepping Stones

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Definition

- 'Stepping Stones' is a middle school aged program designed to aide in the development of children ages 6-12 within a group setting using structured teaching methods. Targets are:
 - Gross/Fine Motor
 - Social/Communication
 - Following Routines
 - Academic Supports
 - Self Help Skills
 - Turn Taking



Structured Teaching

- 'Structured teaching' allows for implementation of a variety of instructional methods (e.g., visual support strategies, PECS, sensory integration strategies, discrete trial and music/rhythm intervention strategies). It is one of many approaches to consider in working with children with autism.

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Structured Teaching

- **Primary Components of Structured Teaching:**
 - *Physical structure*
 - *Visual Schedules*
 - *Teaching method*
- Structured teaching greatly increases a child's independent functioning (i.e., without adult prompting or cueing) which will assist him throughout life.

Philosophy

- According to Susan Stokes:
- “[Structured Teaching]” is an intervention philosophy developed by the University of North Carolina, Division TEACCH. It is an approach in instructing children with autism that allows for implementation of a variety of instructional methods.

Importance

- **This approach to working with children with autism is based on the individual's skills, interests and needs. It is organizing the students environment to allow the students to participate as independently as possible in their environments.**
 - At school
 - At home
 - In the community



Stepping Stones Program

- Focus on middle school aged children
- Programs occur as:
 - 1 hour Group Sessions weekly
(1-3 group members)
 - One-on-One Session if necessary





Stepping Stones Goals

- Each child has opportunities for direct instruction from staff to focus on the acquisition of new communication skills, academic skills, self help skills, and work routines.
- All children also have opportunities to practice these skills and learn social skills in meaningful, motivating group activities.
- Individual time will focus on learning to use Structured Teaching elements and developing cognitive, communication, and social skills.



The Role of the Facilitator

- This includes:
 - Being flexible to each participant's needs, and choosing goals that support them
 - Taking advantage of teachable moments
 - Teaching at the participant's pace
 - Developing a social emotional relationship with the participant
 - Applying calm, consistent discipline based on behavior management principles and structured teaching methods
 - Earning the trust of the participant
 - Being aware and sensitive of participant's sensory needs
 - Tracking progress

The Role of the Facilitator



- To provide participants with the skills that will allow them to achieve success as they continue to learn outside of their program.

Current Programs

- Each program is based specifically on individual needs
- Group members are paired following an assessment of functional level and social strengths.



Current Programs

- Resources
 - Books and Worksheets
 - A Work in Progress (Ron leaf), Tasks Galore (Division TEACCH) and 101 Activities for kids in tight spaces
 - DVDs and CD-Roms
 - Difficult moments for children and youth with autism spectrum disorders, and Making a difference: The video collection



Current Programs

- Sample Stepping Stones Plan:
 - Activities
 - General Greetings and conversation skills
 - Group Time / Turn Taking
 - Gross Motor Time
 - Self Help Time
 - Academic Development Time



Current Programs

- Program will run on a 8 week session block
- The cost is \$15.00/session = \$120.00/session
- Intake package and registration must be completed prior to entering program start date.
- Communications logs will go between home and program weekly
- OT will provide sensory diet input for program environment



Outlook

- Continual development of current programs
- Development of 'transition program'
- Focus on skill practice and generalization through community and home based activities.

Q & A

- Thank you for your time and do not hesitate to ask any questions.